

SENATOR BURROWS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, first I have a question. Is this page 1581 amendments?

CLERK: Yes.

SENATOR BURROWS: The purpose of this amendment is to change \$1,250,000 which is appropriated to the community programs and is sent directly in the budget bill to the community programs, to send it to the community programs through the Department of Institutions, DPI. This is approximately or very closely drafted as was the Governor's recommendation on the bill where it puts state control back over these funds and the use of them as they are used in the community programs to pay for services for those that are moved from the Beatrice State Home. Really the basic reason that I am carrying this amendment starts about four years ago when I was on the Advisory Board to DPI and the Department of Public Welfare, on the Governor's Advisory Board, and at that time, we were asking, and it happened to be out in Region VI, we were asking for an accounting on the funds so that we could really know what was going on with the state funds. At that time, we were told by some regional leadership that it more or less wasn't any of our business and I think it is the state's business. That person is no longer working but there has been a great deal of feel that the state, even though it is funding it, doesn't have or should not have much control over the community programs. I think it is the state's responsibility to see that these funds do not go into administrative costs, that they go into human services as they are intended by this Legislature, and if we bypass DPI with this 1.25 million of funds, we are giving up any handle for members of the Legislature to get input when abuses come up, when people get involved with running a race for body count to get funds for their own programs. Last Fall, Senator Merz got a call from a family down in his district or I guess it was this Winter, it was very early in the session, at the start of the session. There was a young man in the Beatrice Home, the parents were very pleased to have him there. He is in a coma, in an almost intensive care position and it was costing the state \$40 some a day, a little over \$40 a day, to take care of him. The parents lived close enough they could visit him and still he was being up for movement against the wishes of the parents to either a lesser care area, if they were going to do it at the same cost, or going to move this young man to probably two or three times the cost against the wishes of the parents to an area that was going to be a long ways from them where they could not visit him. It didn't make any sense, and after we called and checked up on it, in just a couple of days it got straightened out, but if these funds, this 1.25 million, they weren't all spent last year and there will be accusations that they will not be spent if they go through the state but it would be better for us if they are not spent unless they are spent for improvement, for real human services and basic needs and I think the DPI has a sincere interest in the parents and in the people involved in these programs that they go in the direction where they get the best care for the most reasonable costs. It is best for all involved and especially the concern of the parents. I hope that the body will look seriously at this, that we, as State Senators, if it goes through DPI, will have a much stronger voice, a much stronger input. If we have complaints that come to us about placement of people from the